

LA-UR-21-24670

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Title: Independent Assessment Program

Author(s): Bardos, Gyongyi Maria Claire
Littleton, Seth Corey

Intended for: Report

Issued: 2021-05-14

Disclaimer:

Los Alamos National Laboratory, an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, is operated by Triad National Security, LLC for the National Nuclear Security Administration of U.S. Department of Energy under contract 89233218CNA000001. By approving this article, the publisher recognizes that the U.S. Government retains nonexclusive, royalty-free license to publish or reproduce the published form of this contribution, or to allow others to do so, for U.S. Government purposes. Los Alamos National Laboratory requests that the publisher identify this article as work performed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Energy. Los Alamos National Laboratory strongly supports academic freedom and a researcher's right to publish; as an institution, however, the Laboratory does not endorse the viewpoint of a publication or guarantee its technical correctness.



Independent Assessment Program

Seth Littleton
Division Leader, Institutional Quality and Performance Assurance
Claire Bardos
Team Leader, Institutional Quality and Performance Assurance-ASO

May 14, 2021



Managed by Triad National Security, LLC, for the U.S. Department of Energy's NNSA.

Independent Assessment Program

Overview of Program

- Independent assessment program overview
- IAS planning

Status

- FY 21 IAs
- Recent results

Future Direction and Benefits

- Streamline procedures
- iLINK tool for improved efficiency and consistency
- Continuous improvement

Questions

Overview of the Independent Assessment Program

- Independent Assessments
 - Performed to verify adequacy and effectiveness of operations
 - Focused on risk management and program requirements
- Independence of the assessor is the hallmark
 - May not be responsible for the work being assessed
 - Must be independent from cost, schedule, and organizational influence
- Program administered by IQPA but implemented by all Lab organizations

Overview of the Independent Assessment Program

Independent assessments encompass a wide range of assessment types:

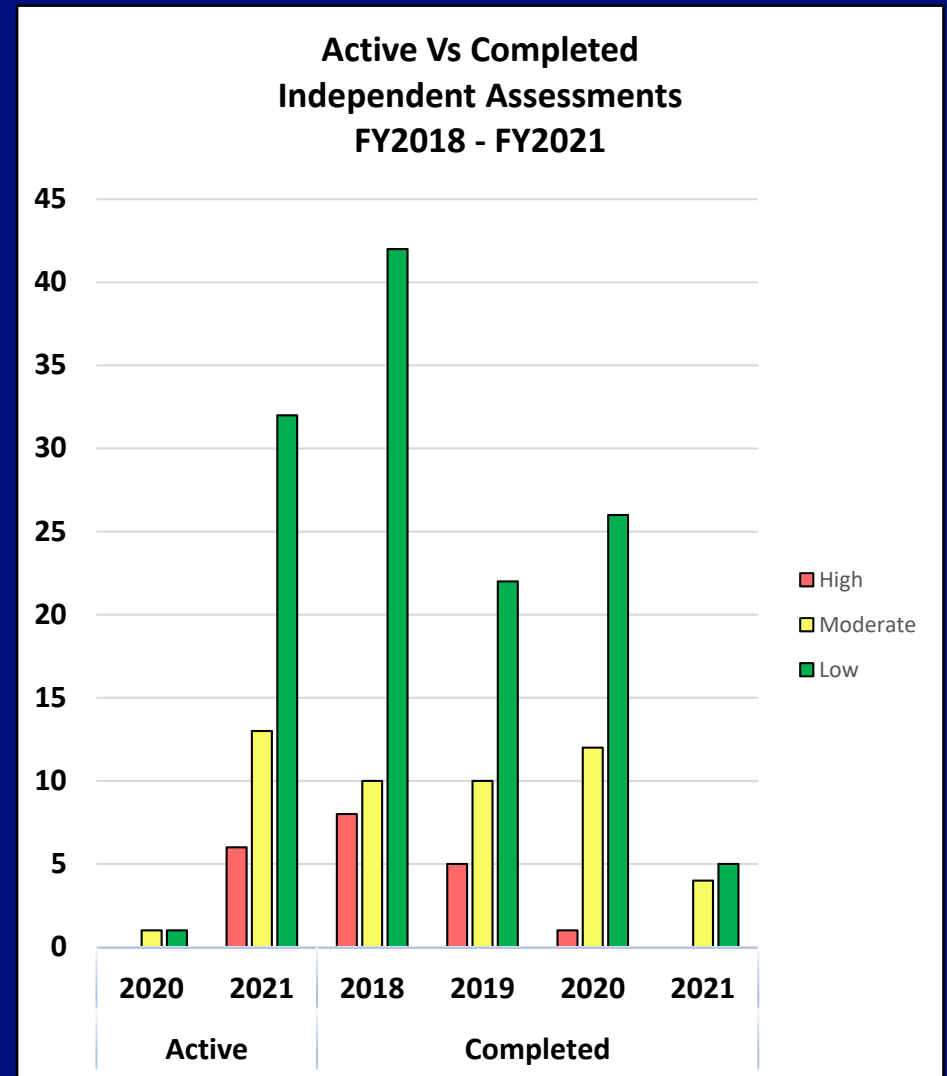
- Audits
- Assessments
 - Internal (e.g., Ethics and Audits; Quality)
 - Independent oversight assessments (Battelle IO model)
 - Focus on effectiveness rather than compliance
- Critical function evaluations (heightened role of subject matter experts)
- Does not include management assessments and management observations and verifications (MOV) - Assessors not independent

Annual Independent Assessment Schedule (IAS) Planning Process

1. Associate Lab Directorates (ALDs) identify and categorize risk.
2. Division Leaders plan assessments based on requirements and risks resulting in the Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP). (May—July)
3. Draft IAP is sent to the Field Office (NA-LA), which begins to assign shadows and identify topics of NA-LA assessments. (Mid-July)
4. LANL Institutional Management Review Board approves the IAP. (August 15)
5. Approved IAP is sent to NA-LA. (Immediately upon IMRB approval)
6. NA-LA adds shadows and assessments to the IAP to produce the Site Integrated Assessment Plan (SIAP). (September NA-LA deliverable to DOE HQ)
7. NA-LA transmits the SIAP to LANL becoming the final LANL IAS.

Status of Assessment Program

- FY2019 saw decline in completed assessments
- FY2020 numbers increase
- Scheduled to complete 62 assessments in FY21
- Six high-risk assessments in planning stages for this FY
 - Focused on packaging and transportation

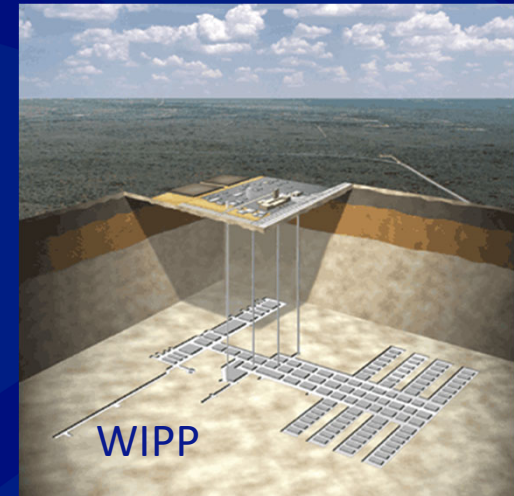


Results of Recent (FY2021 Q2) IAs

Assessment Type	Topic	Results
Independent Audit by EA-DO	Consultant/Guest Agreements	Repeat Findings - Invoices with insufficient detail/coding; consulting services awarded under nonconsulting agreements One New Finding - Records not readily retrievable; anticipated solution in forthcoming Ariba software)
Independent Audit by EA-DO	Shipping	Two Findings - Documentation not in accordance with requirements; incomplete self assessments Two OFIs - Required training not completed; timely updates to procedures
Independent Assessment by PIO-CM	ALDCP Pre-Job and Post Job Briefings	No Findings Several OFIs - Stop work authority; provide comprehensive SOWs and PJBs; clarify permit issues
Independent Assessment by NCS-RPT	Nuclear Criticality Safety Program Assessment of the NCS Elements	No Findings Multiple OFIs - 3 focusing on program evaluation, 3 on document improvement, 1 on emergency response and 2 on resource planning
Independent review by HR-ITS	Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility	No Findings Two OFIs - Training POC knowledge; course/instructor feedback Three Noteworthy Practices - Lines of authority, ensure a comprehensive, defense-in-depth support from line management; positive training program management; deep understanding of the learning process
Independent Audit by C-AAC	Actinide Analytical Chemistry A2LA Scope of Accreditation	Six Noteworthy Practices Two OFIs - Process improvements and prevention of future deficiencies

Upcoming Independent Oversight Assessment

- Safety Culture at LANL Remote Work Sites
- Scope:
 - Safe Conduct of Research principles
 - Lab mission/vision/values relating to subcontractors' safe conduct of work at remote sites
- Utilizing Longenecker & Associates subject matter expert
- In planning and scoping phase



Future Direction and Improvements

1. Consolidate assessment procedures
 - a. Streamline for clarity and user friendliness
2. Program improvements underway
 - a. iLink Assessment Module in FY2022 – Provide enhanced ability to manage assessments and analyze program status/effectiveness
 - b. Increasing IQPA staffing support
 - c. Increased number of assessments focused on NQA-1 incorporating a broader cross section of the Laboratory
3. Targeted benefits of the program
 - a. Risk is more effectively managed
 - b. Improved insight for improved oversight
 - c. Enhanced implementation of contractor assurance and quality assurance
 - d. Continuous improvement of operations and deliverables

Questions

